

Mission San Francisco de la Espada  
San Antonio, Texas.

HABS No. Tex-320

HABS

TEX

15- SANT.V

2-

**ADDENDUM  
FOLLOWS...**

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of Texas-3

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Bartlett Cooke, District Officer.  
615 Maverick Bldg., San Antonio, Texas.

MISSION SAN FRANCISCO DE LA ESPADA  
San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas.

ADDENDUM  
FOLLOWS...

Owner: Roman Catholic Church

Date of Erection: 1731

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Father Manzanet and General Alonso de Leon.

Present Condition: Original mission was started in 1690; it was later abandoned, and then moved to present site. Church still standing; wall and other buildings nearly gone.

Number of Stories: One

Materials of Construction: Limestone and plaster.

Other Existing Records: "San Antonio de Bexar" by William Corner.

Additional Data:

This mission was founded by General Alonso de Leon and Father Manzanet, May 23, 1690. A few years later it was abandoned. Several attempts were made to reestablish it, and finally the present mission was established in 1731 on the San Antonio River.

It was built of limestone and mortar. Tradition has it that the mortar was mixed with asses milk, which the priests consecrated to the service. "San Francisco de la Espada" means "St. Francis of the Sword", and according to tradition the old tower was built in the form of the hilt of a sword.

The Apache tribes were always hostile, and frequent raids were made by them on the missions, and, at one time, they slaughtered seven hundred head of cattle belonging to San Jose alone. Epidemics also took their toll from the early missionaries and made the struggle for existence harder.

Though the church of this mission was started it had not been completed by 1762, due to a lack of stone of good quality. In the meantime a spacious room was used for mass. The convent was composed of four cells, in the second story, with three on the ground floor, with three corridors, a workshop, and a spacious granary all of stone.

The pueblo had three rows of stone houses properly furnished. The ranch was improved with one stone house where attending families lived.

In 1778 only forty families totalling one hundred thirty three souls lived at the mission; by 1793 there were only thirty four people left.

On November 10, 1794, all the missions were ordered secularized and the lands and movables were distributed among the Indians. The Zacatecan friars continued their ministry though until well into the 19th century. In 1804 there were one hundred and seven people at the Espada Mission.

The process of secularization went on very slowly in Texas, and in spite of the Spanish Cortes decree of 1813, it was not until 1823 that the last mission at San Antonio became extinct, and then diocesan priests took the place of the Franciscan friars.

This information was secured from "Indians & Missions" by Frederick Chabot.

Author: Charles Bertrand

Charles Bertrand

APPROVED: Bartlett Cocke

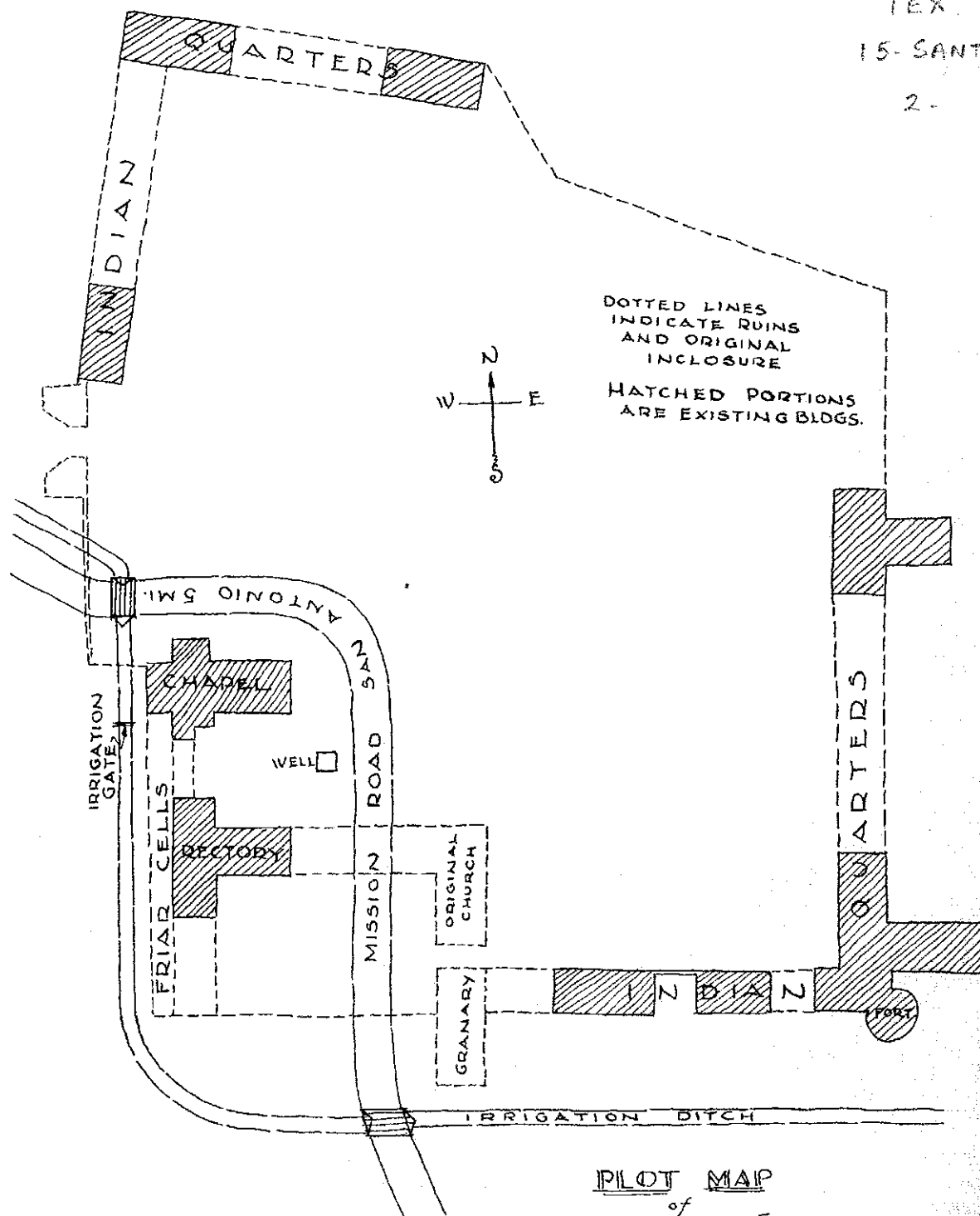
Bartlett Cocke, Dist. Officer.

Date: May 17, 1936.ADDENDUM  
FOLLOWS...

TW 7/26/37

TEX  
15-SANT.V

2-



PLOT MAP  
of  
Mission San Francisco  
de la Espada

Mission San Francisco de la Espada  
Berg's Mill Community  
San Antonio  
Bexar County  
Texas

HABS No. TX-320

HABS  
TEX  
15-SANT, V,  
2-

Addendum to:

Mission San Francisco de la Espada  
San Antonio, Texas  
(as originally recorded)

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL DATA